



City of Greenbelt Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers play a key role in caring for our remnant woods. On March 12, a group of twelve (12) volunteers and two (2) Public Works employees participated in a tree protection volunteer event at Greenbelt Lake in Buddy Attick Park. The service-learning opportunity brought a family and individuals together to protect a total of twenty-seven (27) trees from beaver herbivory and invasive English ivy takeover.

North American beavers (*Castor canadensis*) are second only to humans in their ability to manipulate their environment. The beaver family at Greenbelt Lake is downing trees at a rate much faster than they regrow. Beavers are a keystone species by maintaining habitats that are relied on by many others. For example, beavers create standing dead wood which is inhabited by insects, and in turn attracts bird life. The City of Greenbelt coexists with beavers by protecting slow-growth native tree species and leaving nonnative trees uncaged as a food source and building material for their lodges.

English ivy (*Hedera* helix) is native to Europe and was introduced into North America by early settlers for ornamental purposes. It grows both along the ground, where it can displace native understory species, and in the tree canopy, often covering branches and harming trees. Volunteers play a key role in forest restoration by liberating trees from invasive climbing ivy.

A total of eight (8) trees were protected from beavers by placing wire caging around the trunks. Nine (9) additional trunks were re-caged to make available space for tree growth and expansion. About ten (10) trees were liberated from English ivy using hand shears. Volunteers reflected that their favorite part of the event was

working together as a team to protect trees. Over the past year, volunteers have protected over 200 trees from

beaver herbivory and 150 trees from English ivy takeover in Buddy Attick Park.

In addition to protecting trees, volunteers collected one (1) bag of litter that was later sorted to separate

recyclables from trash. Among the most common items collected were aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and

tennis balls. Over the past year, volunteers collected over 1,200 pounds of litter along shorelines at Greenbelt

Lake and Indian Creek. The event was sponsored by the City of Greenbelt Department of Public Works and the

Greenbelt Forest Stewardship Project.

The next restoration tree planting volunteer event will take place in honor of Arbor Day on Saturday,

April 2 from 10 am – 12 pm at Schrom Hills Park, 6915 Hanover Parkway, Greenbelt, MD 20770. Following

the tree planting, space is limited for the Advisory Committee on Trees (ACT) annual free tour of Greenbelt's

most outstanding trees. RSVP to confirm your availability at

http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084eaaa72eaaff2-arbor1. Contact Brian Townsend at

btownsend@greenbeltmd.gov for more information.

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